

BEST PRACTICE CATALOG

Project Title: **POINT AND LEVEL SYSTEM**

Function Category: ☒ PATIENT-FOCUSED ☐ ORGANIZATION ☐ STRUCTURES

Subcategory: **Care of Patients**

Heading: **Behavior Management**

Key Word(s): **Incentive Program**

Contact Person: **Dr. Bruce Hilsberg**

Telephone Number: **(562) 409-7112**

Hospital: **Metropolitan State Hospital**

Purpose: An essential component of the therapeutic environment at MSH utilizes positive reinforcement, which involves giving the children feedback when they engage in appropriate and desirable behavior. The point system allows children to receive extra positive reinforcement each day for specific target behaviors. The purpose of a level system is to determine which activities are appropriate for each child. Higher levels represent less restrictive settings.

Brief Description: This positive reinforcement is in the form of points, which can be exchanged for incentive items. The children receive these points for attendance and participation in select activities. This extra positive reinforcement is called the Point System. The children on Levels 1, 2, and 3 can receive a maximum of 25 points each day. When children are first admitted to the program, the point system is explained to them by their treatment team. By the end of the first week, they should be fully incorporated into the system. At the end of each activity, the children are told how many points they earned. The points are assigned in a positive way, emphasizing what the child accomplished. If a child inquires why more points were not given, then the explanation focuses on how the child could earn more point in the future, rather than on what the child did wrong. For each day, the point sheet begins with the PM shift from the previous day and ends with the last activity before the opening of the incentive store. The weekly point sheets are kept in a binder, which should remain on the unit at all times. Completed point sheets are kept on the unit a minimum of two months. Each evening, the points are totaled and feedback is given to the children. Sometime after dinner, the unit staff opens up the incentive store so that the children can cash in the points they earn. In order for the children to be eligible to use the store that evening, they must exhibit appropriate behavior from the beginning of the PM shift (1445) to the time the store is opened. When the store is opened, the children who are eligible to use it can purchase incentive items and/or rent incentive equipment/time with the points they earned (up to 25). The points not used each day are deposited into the child's savings